



Helping Seniors Survive the Recession

The effects of a recession on seniors can be especially profound. Fortunately, we were able to pass several laws which help reduce health care costs, keep seniors in their homes and protect them from scam artists. The General Assembly:

- ▶ Reduced the 15 percent co-pay on the Home Care Program for Elders to 6 percent. The reduction will save the average client in the program nearly \$100 per month on co-pays.
- ▶ Reopened the Alzheimer’s Respite Care Program to provide respite services for caregivers.
- ▶ Protected the privacy of those who participate in senior center programming by exempting personal information from the Freedom of Information laws. This means that information including addresses and telephone numbers won’t be available to the public.

Honoring Veterans, Active-Duty Personnel & Their Families

The General Assembly continued its efforts to support veterans, active-duty personnel and their families. I’m proud that with my support, we were able to pass laws that:

- ▶ Honor Vietnam veterans by proclaiming March 30th of each year as “Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day.” The date was chosen because it commemorates the return home of the last members of the armed forces who served in Vietnam.
- ▶ Extend the expiration date of driver’s licenses for active-duty service members serving out of state.
- ▶ Provide credit or an exemption toward the requirements of a professional license or certificate for members of the armed forces who received substantively similar training during their military service.



Dear Neighbor,

Everywhere I go constituents tell me the same thing: they want state government to focus on growing jobs and balancing the budget. I got the message.

This session we worked with Governor Rell to pass a historic bipartisan jobs bill. The initiative helps businesses get access to the capital and credit that they need to thrive. We also made Connecticut an easier place to do business by cutting back on bureaucratic red tape and streamlining the regulatory process.

We tackled the budget deficit the same way. By working together, we balanced the budget without raising taxes or cutting municipal aid. Instead, we made significant cuts to state spending, maximized federal aid, and reduced borrowing.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you as Connecticut continues on the road to recovery.

Sincerely,
Edith G. Prague
Edith Prague
State Senator



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I’m proud to represent the citizens of:

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Lebanon

Ledyard

Lisbon

Montville

Norwich

Sprague

Aid For Norwich, Montville, Lebanon, Ledyard, Lisbon, Hebron, Columbia, Franklin, Andover, Bozrah and Sprague

State funding for cities and towns impacts your property taxes. That’s why I fought hard to protect funding for our towns. This table shows the state grants and reimbursements for our district in Fiscal Year 2010–2011.

	Fiscal Year 10-11
Total Education Grants	\$85,537,337
Town Aid Road Fund Grant	\$1,345,720
Mashantucket Pequot & Mohegan Fund Grant	\$4,842,354
Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP)	\$866,055
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$2,456,724
Total State Funds to the 19th Senate District	\$95,048,190



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SUMMER 2010

HEALTH CARE

Ensuring Cancer Patients Get the Care They Need

Cancer patients can now take oral doses of chemotherapy to help them fight the disease, but these new medicines can be very expensive, and some insurance companies have been unwilling to fully cover the costs.

Most insurance policies fully cover intravenous chemotherapy and this

new law requires parity for the two strategies. Cancer patients can now rest assured of comparable insurance coverage for each chemotherapy protocol.



Helping Patients Get Answers



When health insurers deny your claim it's easy to feel confused and frustrated. Now, when health insurance companies deny coverage for procedures because they claim they're "not medically necessary" or "not a covered benefit," they must provide patients

with contact information for the Office of the Healthcare Advocate where staff can help patients determine if they have been wrongfully denied coverage and take appropriate action. Call 1-866-HMO-4446 for info.

AGRICULTURAL JOBS



Agriculture has been an important part of Connecticut's economy since colonial days. In order to protect and grow this industry, I supported a bill to update Connecticut's poultry inspection laws and to support small family farms by allowing them to prepare and sell jams, jellies, preserves, pickles, salsa and hot sauce. By helping Connecticut farms, we provide local food for our families—and create jobs.

GROWING JOBS

There was no greater priority this legislative session than helping Connecticut create high-quality jobs. We worked with the governor to do just that. Provisions of the new law include:

- ▶ Loans for small businesses to help fund expansions and additional hires
- ▶ Sales-tax exemptions for machinery and fuel used in renewable energy industries
- ▶ Loan reimbursements and grants for education and careers in green technology and health information technology
- ▶ Tax credits for angel investments in bioscience, photonics, information technology and green businesses



Reducing Red Tape for Businesses

Growing jobs must be Connecticut's top priority. A new law streamlines the state's environmental permitting process for economic development projects by reducing government bureaucracy. In business, time is money—and now Connecticut businesses will have the opportunity to save both. Of course, environmental safeguards cannot be overlooked. That's why we worked with environmental advocates and business leaders to ensure that a faster permitting process doesn't jeopardize the quality of the air we breathe or the water we drink.

Standing Up For Vocational-Technical Schools

Vo-tech graduates contribute mightily to a well-trained, highly qualified, experienced workforce. That's why I worked with my colleagues to help reform the system and ensure that it has adequate resources. For too long the 10,000 students enrolled in vo-tech high schools have endured understaffing, shortages of classroom and shop supplies, a shortage of buses—with many in a state of disrepair—and virtually no budgetary oversight. The new law will bring increased transparency to vo-tech budgeting and heightened sensitivity by the state Board of Education to the needs of these schools.



continue to rise in the future; reinstating this program will help us meet future workforce demands.

I also, worked with my colleagues to reinstate the licensed practical nurse (LPN) program at our vo-tech schools. Projections show that demand for LPN's will only

HELPFUL RESOURCES

FOR SENIORS

- ▶ **Medicare Savings Programs (MSP)**
By joining MSP, eligible seniors could save \$1,000 per year or more in Medicare Part B premiums, and the Medicare Part D Low-Income Subsidy would lower prescription co-payments. Most individuals in ConnPACE are eligible for Medicare and can enroll in MSP.

As a ConnPACE member, your pharmacy co-payment is now \$16.25. Your pharmacy co-pay could be reduced to as low as \$2.50 for generics and \$6.30 for brand-name drugs on Medicare Part D's Drug list. For more information, call CHOICES at 1-800-994-9422, speak to a representative at 211, or visit www.ct.gov/dss/medicaresavingsprograms.



JOB RESOURCES

- ▶ **CTWorks Career Centers**
A regional Career Center is located in Norwich to provide guidance and services to those seeking employment. 860-859-5600
- ▶ **Where to Turn When Unemployed**
The United Way of Connecticut has produced a document titled "Where to Turn in Connecticut When You Become Unemployed." It contains information regarding unemployment insurance, medical benefits, legal assistance and help with job searches and money management. Contact my office at 1-800-842-1420 to receive this helpful publication or visit our Jobs Web page (see above) to download a copy.

FORECLOSURE RELIEF

- ▶ **The First Step in Connecticut**
If you're having trouble paying your mortgage, or are facing delinquency or foreclosure, contact one of Connecticut's Housing Counseling Agencies. Each agency is prepared to give advice, screen your eligibility for potential assistance programs and offer other resources to help you keep your home. Call Catholic Charities & Family Services in Norwich at 860-889-8346. You can also contact my office at 1-800-842-1420.



Additional Resources and Links

Follow links to these special pages from www.senatedems.ct.gov:

- ▶ Resources for Jobseekers
- ▶ Protecting Homeowners, Preventing Foreclosures
- ▶ Veterans' Guide
- ▶ Health Care Programs in Connecticut
- ▶ A Guide to the State Budget